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THE ANTI-KARAITE WRITINGS OF SAADIAH GAON.

THE period between the conclusion of the Babylonian Talmud and the activity of the last Geonim, extending from the sixth till the ninth century, although not totally destitute of literary documents, is yet one of the most obscure epochs in Jewish history. That space of time was, nevertheless, of vast importance for the intellectual life of Judaism. The period comprises the activity of the Massoretes, the introduction of our system of punctuation, the production of a number of Midrashim, and a series of mystical writings. The liturgy assumes fixed forms¹, and—which is of special importance—in the second half of that period new doctrines arise, diverging from official, traditional Judaism, and new sects spring up. It is true, many of these sects hardly survived their authors, yet many of them succeeded in living, at least for some time; whilst one of them, that of the Karaites, continues to exist even to the present day.

The period also was productive of many riddles, that have not been solved even yet, one of which is the attitude of the Geonim towards the Karaite doctrines. These official representatives of the Judaism of the day, did nothing to avert the danger that threatened from the part of the Karaites. They neither tried to warn the people against the opinions of the Karaites, nor did they endeavour to regain the apostate sectarians for traditional Judaism, or to rebut the Karaite teachers. Nor is it certain that the

¹ The fixing of our constant calendar dates also probably from that time. Cf. my essay on Ben Meir in the JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, Oct., 1897.

Geonim appealed to the secular authorities against the Karaites¹, and, perhaps, they only made some arrangements which had an anti-Karaite tendency². It is a fact, that the name of 'Anân appears only once in the whole literature before Saadiah, in a *responsum* of Natronai b. Hillai, and the passage proves that the latter knew 'Anân's code of laws only from hearsay³. The only Gaon, perhaps, who, before Saadiah, entered occasionally upon the attacks of the Karaites, was Hai b. David⁴.

We are, as I mentioned before, too little acquainted with the internal history of the Judaism of that period, to be able to discover and form a judgment on the motives by which the Geonim were guided. If the Geonim were of opinion that the movement would be nipped in the bud by being ignored, or that the heresy was only a transient phenomenon, incapable of striking root among the people, and that, in consequence, it was superfluous to combat it—if they thought this, they were thoroughly mistaken. Karaism is still in existence, after more than a thousand years, although its condition is only a poor one. During the first century of its existence, however, the movement seems to have made proselytes among the Rabbanites, so that even Sahl b. Mazliach and Tobia b. Moses mention Rabbanites, who subsequently joined the Karaites⁵.

But the work that had been neglected by the Geonim of Babylon, was taken up with great ardour by a young scholar of Egypt, namely Saadiah al-Fajjumi. When a young man of twenty-three, he stood up as an opponent

¹ Cf. Schorr, *Hechaluz*, VI, 70 sqq.

² Vid. Weiss, *Dor dor uedorschaw*, IV, 107 sqq.

³ Vid. . . . וחלמדי ענן ירקב שמו אבי אביו של דניאל : f. 38 a : סדרו רב עמרם גאון . . . חוש המשלש ברשע ובמינות שאמר לכל התועים והזונים אחרי עזבו דברי משנה וחלמוד ואני אעשה לכם חלמוד משלי . . . וראה מרנא ורבנא אלעזר אלוף ו'ל ספר חובעות שלו שקורין אחרו ספר מצות כמה חבולות יש בו וכו'.

⁴ Vid. Harkavy, *Studien u. Mittheilungen*, V, 108, note 2.

⁵ Sahl's words in Pinsker, *Likkute Kadmonioth*, p. 33; those of Tobia in *Hashachar*, VII, 217, and *Monatsschrift*, XXX, 471.

of 'Anân, the founder of the sect of the Karaites¹, and a great portion of his chequered life was devoted to combating the Karaite doctrines. His appointment as Gaon at Sora he owed, probably, in part to his activity in that direction, in spite of the usage that had been hitherto in force, to give that dignity only to a scholar from the school of the Geonim². Later authorities were also grateful to him for his having made a stand against heresy in general, and against the Karaites in particular³, and Moses di Rieti opens the Paradise for Saadiah for his polemics against the Sectarrians⁴.

Besides the polemical dissertation against 'Anân, Saadiah also wrote some other anti-Karaite works, none of which has been preserved. I shall now try to fix the number and contents of such works from quotations that are still extant⁵.

1. The first anti-Karaite work of Saadiah, was, as already said, his polemical essay against 'Anân, entitled

¹ Vid. *infra*.

² I say "in part," for there is no doubt that the fame of his other writings, which he composed in Egypt, had come as far as Babylonia. It is even said that in the year 921 a question was directed to him from Babylonia, for the purpose of refuting the dicta of a certain Ben Meir in reference to the Festivals. Vid. Harkavy, l. c., 212 sqq. Abraham ibn Daud's notice in his Chronicle (ed. Neubauer, p. 65), (רב סעדיה) ובמחבריו חנר (רב סעדיה), has long been recognized to be incorrect; vid. Grätz, *Geschichte*, V, note 20.

³ Vid. e.g. Abraham ibn Daud's words (l. c., p. 66): ועשה טובות גדולות לישראל: והשיב השובות על המינים ועל הכופרים בחוריה וכו'.

⁴ *Mikdash Meat*, ed. Goldenthal, f. 95 a: רב סעדיה נאון עם ספריו. והשובות: למינים מאיר אישן.

⁵ I have already mentioned Saadiah's anti-Karaite writings in my "Karaite Miscellanies" (*Jewish Quarterly Review*, VIII, 689-691). Before that time, Dukes (*Beiträge*, &c, II, 32, 33) and Steinschneider (*Cat. Bodl.*, cols. 2165-2168) gave a list of those writings. The latter compiled methodically and exhaustively everything that was known on the subject before 1860, and my exposition was partly based on his. But I was obliged to differ from him on many points, and most particularly in the arrangement of the writings, in consequence of fresh material, and many additions.

אלרד עלי ענן, written in his twenty-third year, i.e. 915. For, as Luzzatto¹, and Geiger² have shown, it is to this writing that the verse: כתבו בן שלש עשרים להפר עצת ענן אשר קשר ומרד, quoted by Abraham Ibn Ezra (יסוד מספר, ed. Pinsker, p. 170), refers. The essay is, as far as I know, cited by name only by Saadiah himself in his Commentary to Gen. viii. 3, and to Lev. xxiii. 15. The former passage, quoted by Jefeth b. 'Ali in his Commentary ad loc., reads as follows³: אלרד עלי ענן אקואל ואסעה מן אלרד עלי מן אחתשהר בקצה ותנה התיבה אלרד עלי ענן אללהאל אדא למ יר פינב אן יחסב אלשהר ל אלך. 'Anân inferred from the circumstance that the Flood lasted five months—150 days—that, whenever the moon was invisible from any cause whatever, the month had always thirty days, without any regard to the preceding months; for Noah counted the five months as 150 days, because he could not see the new moon in the Ark. Saadiah refuted that view at great length⁴. The other passage, also quoted by Jefeth ad loc., reads thus: וקולה למועד חדש האביב לים ינב אן נלחמם אלאביב ענר כל שהר ניסן ואנמא הו עלאמה לוקת כרונזהם אנהם כרנו מן מצר וכאן אביב במצר לקולה הנאך כי השעורה אביב או לגיר דלך . . . ופי היא חנז כתירה נכתצר תדוניהא האהנא וקד אלתנתאהא פי כתאב אלרד עלי ענן אלך. This refers, therefore, to the question of considering the ripeness of the new ears of corn when an

¹ In Pinsker's *Einleitung in d. babyl. Punctuationssystem*, p. 206.

² *Kerem Chemed*, IX, 64. Harkavy, l. c., p. 199, conjectures that this was a verse of Saadiah himself, and that it was contained in the fourth chapter of his הנלי ספר.

³ Communicated by Munk, *Additions à la notice sur Saadja* (at the end of his edition of Tanchum to Habakkuk), p. 106.

⁴ Here is not the place to dwell on this subject, and I will only say briefly that, as far as I know, this opinion is not mentioned in the older Karaite literature, nor, as it seems, was it ever put into practice. Something similar is found in Bashiatschi's *Adereth Elijahu*, ענין קדוש החדש, chapter 11: מלאים ר' מלאים הנה וחדש הישן וחדש הנה נעשה ר' מלאים. זה אחר זה לא יתר והראיה מן הכתוב מה שנאמר בענין זה Cf. also Ibn Ezra's full commentary to Genesis vii. 13 (ed. Friedländer, p. 53).

intercalary month was to be fixed. This essay is also, without doubt, alluded to by Salmon b. Jerucham in his controversy against Saadiah, c. 14, letter ו' י' (ר"ל סעדיה) כי לא יכול למן, על ספר החכם המאור תפארת סגולת י"י רבינו ענן יע' נב' הריק חרמו. "שיניו יחרוק על רבינו ענן, כי חציו ברבותיו שגן וכו' Besides, Qirqisâni is thought by Harkavy² to quote it in his *Kitâb al-'Anwâr* anonymously. Whether the report in his *Kitâb al-'Anwâr* anonymously. Whether the report in his *Kitâb al-'Anwâr* (Pinsker, p. 103), in the name of a Rabbanite, as to the low motives that induced 'Anân to come forward, and the objectionable means he employed, is directly copied from this writing of Saadiah, as Pinsker³ and Harkavy⁴ assume, must remain an open question, for we have no exact information about the authorship, the time, and the trustworthiness of that Karaite chronicle⁵. It must however be observed, that it is expressly stated in an old Karaite commentary to Exodus, which Harkavy thinks was written by Sahl b. Mazliach, that Saadiah accused 'Anân that the only reason the latter had for fixing the new moon from observation was a desire to flatter the Caliphs⁶. Saadiah was also called the author of the same accusation in a Karaite fragment⁷, whose author, as Frankl proved⁸, was not Tobia b. Moses, but Jehudah Hadassi. We learn from that fragment, that Ben-Mashiach had already written on this subject against Saadiah. At all events, the fact that no other author, except Saadiah himself, quotes this controversial writing by name, sufficiently proves that must have been lost already at a very early date. If we find, therefore, in later Karaitic writings some allegations from Saadiah's books, which he wrote against

¹ Vid. Pinsker, *Likkute Kadmonioth*, p. 18.

² l. c., p. 107.

³ l. c., p. 98.

⁴ "Zur Entstehung des Karaismus" (in Grütz's *Geschichte*, V, 3rd edition).

⁵ Vid. Steinschneider, *Hebr. Bibliogr.*, V, 49; XX, 91; *Cat. Lugd.*, 104; Schorr, l. c., 77.

⁶ Vid. Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mittheil.*, V, 225. Cf. also his edition of Qirqisâni, 254, note 4.

⁷ In Pinsker, p. 95.

⁸ *Monatsschrift*, XXXI, 77-81.

'Anân, this particular book was not their source. The following points are, as far as I know, those about which Saadiah wrote against 'Anân.

Qirqisâni, in the 29th chapter of the eleventh section of his *Kitâb al-'Anwâr*, gives information about Saadiah's controversy against 'Anân on the subject of the prohibited degrees of relationship¹. Such controversy could have been contained in the pamphlet under discussion, Qirqisâni having been a younger contemporary of Saadiah, and having undoubtedly known it. On the other hand, it is possible that it was contained in Saadiah's Commentary to the Pentateuch or in his ספר עריות. Saadiah's repudiation of 'Anân's opinion, that an animal, which dies before it is eight days old, did not defile, was quoted and confuted at length in the MS. of a Karaite Commentary of Leviticus in Arabic, of the year 1050². But in this case also, Saadiah's Commentary of the Pentateuch may have been the source. This is, probably, also the case with another controversy of Saadiah against 'Anân on the subject of the laws of menstruation, as cited in another MS. of an Arabic Commentary of Leviticus (MS. Brit. Mus. Or. 2595, f. 182 b)³. No more can it be said with certainty, in which of his books Saadiah wrote against 'Anân on the subject of forbidden fat, a controversy particularly dealt with by Tobia b. Moses in his אוצר נחמד⁴, on the conception and application of מליקה⁵, and on 'Anân's prohibition of eating meat in the Diaspora⁶. Moses Ibn Ezra relates also in his

¹ Cf. *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, p. 201.

² Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 209, 215.

³ Only fragments of this Commentary have been preserved (Lev. xi. 1-xv. 25). No one is cited there except 'Anân and Saadiah.

⁴ Vid. *Steinschneider, Cat. Bodl.*, 2168; *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, p. 203, note 3.

⁵ Cf. Weiss, l. c., 139.

⁶ 'Anân, and many Karaite authorities after him, prohibit the use of meat in the Diaspora. Vid. Hadassi, *Eshkol Hakkofer*, Alphab. 236, letter 1 sqq. Saadiah combats that view in his Commentary to Daniel (communicated by Mathews in his edition of the *Comm. on Ezra and Nehemiah* by R. Saadiah,

Art of Poetry, that 'Anân was mistaken in his views about the application to the laws of the Torah, of the method of Analogy (היקש, קיום), and that Saadiah confuted them in several of his works. He then cites a passage from Saadiah's commentary to the section קרושים, in which, however, 'Anân is not mentioned¹. It is hardly possible that Moses Ibn Ezra was still in possession of Saadiah's pamphlet, and that it is this he alludes to. Saadiah quotes also and confutes in his philosophical work², a view of 'Anân's about the seat of the soul, but does so without any animosity. It is not likely that Saadiah treated this point also in his polemical work, otherwise he would undoubtedly have quoted the latter, as he does in his polemic against Hiwi-al-Balchi. Besides, in his controversy against 'Anân, he probably confined himself to questions of the Law. Should, however, the passage from the Commentary, attributed to Sahl, and from the חלוק הקראים והרבנים, also have occurred there, the inference would be that Saadiah's attack against 'Anân not only had reference to the controversial topics, but was also directed against 'Anân in person. It follows from all that has been said here, that it is impossible to gain an accurate notion of the contents of this pamphlet of Saadiah.

2. But the most important and voluminous work against the Karaites seems to have been the כתאב אלתמייו (Hebrew: ספר ההכרה or ספר המבחן), "the Book of Distinction." This work was written in the year 926, there-

Preface, p. xvi, and by D. S. Margoliouth in his edition of *Jefeth to Daniel*, Preface, p. vii), without mentioning 'Anân. It is possible that Saadiah treated this point also in his polemical writing against 'Anân. Cf. also my remarks in the *Monatsschrift*, XXXIX, 443, and in *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, p. 204.

¹ *Kitâb al-Muhâdara* (MS. of the Bodleian, Cat. Neub. 1974), f. 108: ואעלם אן קד גלש אלמא קרימא פי אלקיאם . . . והנא סקש ענן ושיערה . . . וקר רר עליהם ור. סעזאל פי כוזר מן חואליזה . . . קאל פי שרח פרשה קרושים אלך. The passage is reproduced from the Oxford MS. in the original by Steinschneider (*Cat. Bodl.*, 2166), and in Hebrew from a St. Petersburg fragment, translated by Harkavy (דורשים גז ישינא, VII, 31).

² Cap. VI, at the commencement (ed. Slucki, 96; ed. Landauer, 190).

fore in Egypt, as is shown by the following passage of Abraham b. Chija (ספר העבור, p. 96): סעדיה ר' ומצאנו הגאון ר' ז"ל זכר המחלוקת הזה בחבורו הנקרא ספר ההכרה ואמר בלשון ערבי דברים אשר יהיה פירושן על הענין הזה השנה הזאת אשר אנו עומדים בה היום היא שנת אלף רל"ה למלכות אלכסנדרוס והיא שנת ד'תרפ"ו לבריאת עולם¹. The work is quoted by Saadiah himself in his Commentary to Gen. viii. 3 (vid. supra), and by the Rabbanites, besides Abraham b. Chija, by Mebasser Hallevi, a contemporary and opponent of Saadiah², by Moses Ibn Ezra in his כתאב אלהיקה פי אלמאזי³, and by Abraham Ibn Ezra in his Commentary to Exod. xxxv. 3⁴. But most frequently it is quoted by Jefeth b. 'Ali in his Commentary on the Bible, and he cites whole passages *verbatim* (חרף בחרף). In order to obtain a clear notion of the contents and form of the work, I reproduce here all passages which I know, and of which two only (Exod. xii. 2 and Lev. xxiii. 15)⁵ have been hitherto printed⁶:—

¹ Cf. about this passage Rapoport, *Erech Millin*, s. v. אלכסנדר מוקדן, p. 87 b sqq.

² Vid. Harkavy in the *Israelitische Monatsschrift* (Supplement to the *Jüd. Presse*), 1891, p. 6.

³ Communicated in ציון, II, 37: אך החימה הגדול על חבירנו המודים בנו שחולקים עלינו (על I.) קהל המינים כי גם הם הסכימו עמם על זאת המחשבה הרעה ברוב ודונם ועזות פניהם לדבר גדולות על דבור הקדושים וז"ל בראותם כי הלכו ברוב דבריהם ע"ד העברה הנמצאות בכתוב . . . ורבינו סעדיה הגאון וז"ל כתב בספר המבחן [ב] בחשיבותיו על בן סקיה האפיקורוס ועל זולתו החולקים ומאריכים לשון על התורה ועל הקבלה מה שיספק לכל שומעיו חדשים גם ישנים). Cf. on this book of Moses Ibn Ezra, Harkavy (VII, 32-34), who has found a large fragment of the Arabic original.

⁴ We read here, it is true, הגאון רב סעדיה חבר ספר נכבד השו"ב על החולקים, but that "book" is only a chapter of the *alhamiy*, vid. Pinsker, p. 18 (cf. also, infra, the quotation from Jefeth to Deut. xxv. 4). In Ibn Ezra's short Commentary (ed. Reggio, p. 111) we read: והשם יכפיל שכו הגאון שהשיב תשובות גמורות על הצדוקים האוסרים נר בשבת.

⁵ Cf. infra.

⁶ I only quote those passages which are distinctly designated as taken from the *alhamiy*, or which are sure to have been taken from that work. All extracts are reproduced, partly from the MSS. in the British Museum, and partly from Pinsker's copies (at present in the Vienna *Beth*

Gen. i. 14.

• • • ומן אדל דלילא אנה (אי ראם אלמתיבה) מכאלף ללאגמאע קולה
 פי אלרד עלי אלקראיין בוהיו לאותות ולמועדים פקאל הדה אלאלפאט
 חרף בחרף פקאל אן קולה והיו לאותות ימכן אלעטף בה עלי אליום
 ואללילה דון אלמאורות לאנה קאל יהי מאורות ברקיע השמים פעלהא
 להבדיל בין היום ובין הלילה פלמא דכר אליום ואללילה קאל עליהמא
 והיו לאותות ולמועדים וכאן הדה אלקול אול מא לאח לי ממכנא פקט
 פלמא גיידת תאמלה ראיתה ואנבא¹ פהדה מא אתבתה אלרגל פי כתאבה
 אלמלקב בכתאב אלתמיין • • •

• • • וקד קד ראם אלמתיבה אן אלרבאנין יכתלפו פי עצרנא הדיא
פבעהם יקול אן אלעבור ליסה ען אלנבי [והוא קולה] חרף בחרף פי
כתאב אלתמיין ודלך אני שאהרת נאם מן אלרבנין פצלא ען אלעאמה ועלי
מכאלפיהם יתוהמון אן קד כאן שהר ניסן יקע פי אלסלף מן אלומאן
פי איאם לים יקע אלאן פיהם והם עלי צרבין מנהם מן יקול כאן אלפסח
יקע יום אלגמעה לא לאתנין ולא לארבעה ומנהם מן יקול כאן יקע איצא פי
אליום אלאתנין ויום אלארבעה תם דכר אחתגאנהם והו קול אלחכמים
פי אלפסח העצמות והגידים והנותר ישרפו בששה עשר חל ששה עשר להיות
בשבת ישרפו בשבעה עשר וקולחם העומר בא בין בשבת בין בחול משלש
סאין וקולחם עצרת שחלה להיות בשבת² • • • פקד נאקץ נפסה פי
מא קאל קבל הדיא אלפצל והו קולה ואקול אן אלגמאעה ינקלון מדהבא
למערפה אלשהור נקלא ומכאלפיהם אכרנו בעד דלך ט מודהב • • •
 וזרת לה פי הדיא אלכתאב איצא פצל אכר עזיב גרא ממה יצעף דעואה

Hamidrash). In the following explanatory notes I confine myself to what is absolutely necessary. I reserve a full treatment of these materials for another occasion.

¹ MS. ואנבא. The Karaites wish to derive from Gen. i. 14 the commandments of observing the first appearance of the moon, and of fixing the beginning of the month accordingly. They explain the verse thus: The luminaries in the firmament of the heavens must serve as signs, to distinguish by them the various times (מועדים is taken to mean "new moons"). Saadiah objects, *inter alia*, that, in that case, ויהרשים would be required, and that ידיו refers to the immediately preceding "day and night." Cf. my remarks in JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, VIII, 702, and *Monatsschr.*, XLI, 208-210.

² Cf. *infra*.

אן אלעבור כאן קדימא והו אסתדלאלה עלי אלעבור באנה כאן ביד בני אסראיל והו קולה חרף בחרף ודלך אני ראית פצית אלנאס מן בני אסראיל קד כאנו יתבדון ראס שחר יומין ולם אנד הדא אלא פי מדהב אלרבאנין פעלמת אן עמל בני אסראיל לם יזל עליה ואצבת איצא פי זבר אלמתקדמין אנהם כאן יעלמון¹ מן קבל חלול ראס אלשהר הל הו יום ואחד או יומין מן קול דוד ליהונתן הנה חדש מחר ואנכי ישב [אשב] עם המלך לאכול ושלחתני ונסתרתי בשדה עד הערב השלישית פכלאמה היא ידל עלי אן ראס אלשהר כאן אלי ערב השלישית ודלך יומין תם לם אקנע² בהדא אלקול חתי וגרת ויהי ממחרת החדש השני ויפקד מקום דוד ויאמר שאול אל יהונתן ותמאם אלקול או יצרף קולה החדש השני אלי שחר תאני בעד כט יום או ל יום לאנה קאל גם תמול גם היום לכני פצחת וקלת לעל היא אליום אלב מן אלשהר והו חול או³ יכון אלשהר נפסה הו שחר ב מן אלסנה פונדטה פי אכר אלקצה ויקם יהונתן מעם השלחן בחרי אף ולא אכל ביום החדש השני לחם פסמא אליום אלתאני חדש כמא סמא אלאול פצה צחה בלא שך מעהא אן אליומין גמיעא יקאל להמא חדש פלו כאן פימא בין אלאמה מדהבאן או ג פיהא אן ראס אלשהר יכון יומין כאן אלחך פי אחרדהא ולם יכן נעלם פי איהם הו מן הדא אלונה פלמא לם נגד פי מא בין אלאמה מדהבא פיה אן ראס אלשהר יומין סוי מדהב אלרבונין צה ענדנא אנה מדהב אלבאא והו אלחך . . . תם קאל בעד הדא קול הו אעגב מן הדא והו קולה ואיד הדא אלמדהב ענדי איצא למא לם נגד פי נץ אלמכתוב במא דא תוכד רוס אלשהור וכאן מן אלואנב אן לא יכלי אלחכים אמתה מערפתהא פלמא לם יוגד דלך פי אלמכתוב כאן באלצרוה פי אלמנקול . . . תם קאל בעד הדא פאן תשבה לבעץ אלנאס אן דלך מנצוץ פי אלכתאב פאני סאדכר פי הדא אלבאב גמיע תלך אלשבהה ואביין אנכסארהא . . . תם קאל בעד הדא בל ראית אלנץ ישיר אלי אנה ההנא עלמא בהא תערף אלאעיאד ולצנאעיתהא קום כואץ מן אלאמה בקולה ומבני יששכר יודעי בינה לעתים לדעת מה יעשה ישראל [ראשיהם] מאתים וכל אחיהם על פיהם ואלעתים אלדי ינב עלי ישראל פיהא אלעשייה פהי ג אולהא חג המצות כקולה ועשית פסח ליוי אלהיך תם חג שבועות קאל פיה ועשית חג שבועות ליוי אלהיך תם חג הסוכות [קאל פיה חג הסכות] תעשה לך שבעת ימים פמן קולה יודעי בינה לעתים עלמנא אן

¹ MS. יעלמן.² MS. אקע.³ MS. אן.⁴ Cf. Hadassi, *Alphab.* 197, letter r sqq.

הוא [אלעתיים] בחסאב תעמל ולדלך פרד להא עלמא וחכמא ולו כאן
ברויא אלהלאל תעמל לם יעל פיהא עלי אלעמא.¹

Gen. xlix. 14.

• • • וארי אן אדכר בדיא מא דכרה אלכעם ואסתדל עלי אן אלעבור
כאן מסתעמל ביד ישראל קדימא קאל היא אלמצל נפסה בדיא פי
כתאבה אלמלקב כתאב אלחמיין בל ראית אלנץ ישיר אלי אנה האהנא
עלמא • • •²

Exod. xii. 2.

• • • פקאל ראם אלמתיבה פי כתאבה אלמלקב בכתאב אלחמיין פצל
פי היא אלבאב והו קולה חרף בחרף ויתאד קול אלגמאעה אנה לא
ילומהם טלב אלסנבל ועלי אן פי אלתורה דכר אביב לאנה לו כאן כמא
יקול כצומהם לכאן אלחכים אחכמה פי תוראתה אלמקדסה מן אי מכאן
יטלב פי אי יום וכם מקדאר כמיתה ומא הו צורתה פלמא לם תונד
חודר הדה אלמעאני פי כתאבה תבין אנה לים בשריעה • • •³

¹ This proof of Saadiah (i. e. from 1 Chron. xii. 33) is also quoted in his name by Sahl b. Mazliach in his polemic (Pinsker, pp. 37, 41), and it was undoubtedly also taken by him from the chronicon, and not from a Commentary of Saadiah to the Chronicles, as Kaufmann (*Notes to Jehuda b. Barzilai's Jezira-Comm.*, p. 336) conjectures. Saadiah's proof is also cited by Levi b. Jefeth in his ספר המצות (vid. *Kerem Chemed*, VIII, 56), and, anonymously, by Aaron b. Elia (*Gan Eden*, f. 4 c). Cf. Munk, *Additions*, &c., p. 108.

² Here follows the same passage as to Gen. i. 14. Pinsker (pp. 38, 39) reproduced here Saadiah's words, together with Jefeth's refutation, in Hebrew. Cf. also Munk, l. c.

³ This passage has already been communicated by Munk, l. c. (cf. also *Isr. Annalen*, 1841, 77). The Karaites maintained that the ripening of the ears (אביב) only had to be regarded at the intercalation of a month, according to Deut. xvi. 1, and try to harmonize this verse with Gen. i. 14, according to which the course of the sun (therefore also the תקופה) would have to be regarded. Vid. Hadassi, *Alphab.* 187 sqq., and *Gan Eden*, f. 16 d sqq. Saadiah, by his theory of the Sinaitic origin of the Jewish Calendar, was compelled to insist that the cycle of nineteen years, with constant calculation, was of remote antiquity, and to explain away the requirement of the אביב. Let it also be noticed that Jefeth, in his commentary to our verse, mentions Saadiah's polemical writing a second time, without, however, quoting anything from it: • • • ואינא אן ראם אלמתיבה (אי פי תפסיר הדודש הזה) נזיר מא תכלס בה פי סדר בראשית ופי כתאב תכלס פיה האהנא (אי פי תפסיר הדודש הזה) נזיר מא תכלס בה פי סדר בראשית ופי כתאב אלחמיין אלוי אלפא ופי כתאב אריר עלי בן סאקיה אלך.

Lev. xxiii. 5.

... אלקול אלאול פי והיו לאותות אנה אלקד בה אלי אלמאורות
לא אלי אלליל ואלנהאר כמא אדעא אלפיומי פי כתבה אלדי ענר מא
קצד מעאנדה אלקראיין פי אחתנאנהם ללרויה בקו' והיו לאותות ולמועדים
פמנע אן יכון והיו לאותות ישיר אלי אלמאורות ונעלה אשארֶה אלי אליום
ואללילה ודאך קו' פי כתאבה אלדי לקבה בכתאב אלתימיו הדה אלאלפאט
חרף בחרף קאל אן קולה והיו לאותות ¹...

... וקד כנא רדנא עלי אלפיומי פי מא דכרה פי כתאבה אלדי
לקבה בכתאב אלתימיו מן אלרד עלי אצחאבנא פי מא יעתקדונה מן
אנה נעל אללה עלאמה אלאראשון אלאביב ואורינא אנה דכר מואהבהם
וצנפאה ותחאמל פי בעצהא עליהם פי מא דכרה ענהם מא לם יקולה
ואנה מע דלך לם ירד עליהם אכתר ממא דכר מואהבהם פקט וסמאה
רד וליס אכתלאפהם ממא ידפע אן יכון אלאביב עלאמה אלאראשון ורדנא
עליה פימא נעל חרש אביב אסם ללשהר ואן ליס אלאביב אסם זרע
ואורינא אנה כאלף אנמאע אליהוד פי דלך ואחצרנא מן כתב אצחאבה
אנהם יקולון באלאביב מתל מא נקול ודכרנא מא קאלוה פי מכאלה (= מכילתא)
החרש הזה לכם ראש חדשים אנהם יעמלון אלפסח עלי אלאביב ואנהם קד
יכבסו כביסה עלי כביסה פי תאכר אלאביב ען אלשהר אליו פי אלסנה אלתי
כאנו קד כבסוהא פי אלעאם אלאול ממא ימול אעאדתה.²

Ibid. (Second Recension)³.

... וקד אקד ראם אלמתיבה פי אלכתאב אלדי לקבה בכתאב אלתימיו
אן בעץ אלרבנוין יקול אן הדיא אלחסאב מחדת ואן אלקרמא כאן עמלו
עלי אלרויה ואן ללשיוך אן ידברו אמר אלאעייד כף שאו ואורא אנה
יתענב מן קולחם הדיא ...
... ואמא זעם ראם אלמתיבה פי כתאבה אן אללה תע אפתרץ פי

¹ The same passage follows as to Gen. i. 14. Cf. also Neubauer, *Aus d. Petersburger Bibliothek*, p. 16.

² Saadiah objected, *inter alia*, that חרש האביב need not necessarily mean "month of the ripening of the ears"; אביב may also be a proper noun, as e. g. in Ez. iii. 15. Vid. *Gan Eden*, f. 16d (Saadiah's name is not mentioned by Hadassi, *Alphab.* 190, letter ט sqq.).

³ Jefeth himself testifies that he had composed two recensions of his commentaries, e. g. to Exod. xxxiv. 18: פי (אי עלי ראם אלמתיבה) פי: החרש הזה לכם פי אלסנה אלאכרה במא פיה כפאיה.

אלגלות מסך יומין מן אנל אן אלבאב עזו פי אעיאר אללה פאונב אללה
אן נמסך יומין . . .¹

Lev. xxiii. 15.

. . . פאמא אלפיומי פקד תכלם פי הדיא אלבאב במא לא יתחצל מנה
שי ודלך אנה געל קאנון כלאמה עלי אית שבת הי אלתי ינב אן יכון אלעדד
גדהא ולם יעלם אן לים בנא חאנה אלי מערפה אית שבת הי ואנמא ינב
אן נערף אית מחרת הי פמא תקדם בה אלקול פאכד יתכלם עלי אלשבת
ויקסמהא כק' פי כתאבה אלמלקב בכתאב אלחמיין פי אנה לים תכלו
היה אלשבת מן אחד כמסה . . .²

Deut. xvi. 1.

. . . ואמא מא דכרה [אי בעץ אלמצלין] מן מדאהב אצחאב אלאביב
פי אלכמיה ואלכיפיה ופי אי יום הו מן אלשהר וגמיע מא דכרה פי כתאבה
אלמלקב בכתאב אלחמיין פאנה לו צדק פי גמיע מא דכרה מן אלמדאהב
למא כן בצרר אד אלכל אעני אלמה באסרהא מגמעה עלי אן אלאביב
אסם לזרע ואנה דליל אדא ונד פי ארץ ישראל . . .
וראית לה פי הדיא אלמעני אמרא עזיבא והו אנה אנכר בדיא אן יכון
אלאביב דלילא ללראשון ואן אלכבאים נאריה עליה וקאל בעד הדיא
אלנמאעה לם יעיידון אלא ואלאביב מוגוד פי ארץ ישראל וליס יכבסו ויונד
אביב פי אלשהר אלזי והו קולה חרף בחרף וונדת לה אן יקולון למא כאנת
כבאיסנא מאכודה ען אלאנביא ען אללה תע ינב אן יקול אן עאלם אלגיב
לם ינזו בהדיא אלכבאים לעלמה באן אלאביב לא בד מן [אן] יקע מנהם
ויכון הדיא דלאלה עלי אן מאלפיהם אית סנה הי לנא בסיטה וקאלו הם

¹ כתאב אלחמיין here does not perhaps indicate Saadiah's polemic against Ibn Saquje, which is also quoted by Jefeth (vid. infra). Be it observed, by the way, that the conception, according to which the observance of two festival days is to be considered as a punishment, is mentioned already in the Talmud. Cf. Jeruschalmi, *Erubin*, III, 9, and parallel passages: מ' גרם לי להיות משמרת שני ימים בסוריא על שלא שמרתי יום אחד בארץ.

² This passage was already printed in Hirschfeld's *Arabic Chrestomathy*, pp. 109-116. Cf. also Neubauer, l. c. In this verse, the phrase אלחמיין is also quoted by Jacob b. Reuben in ספר העשר (vid. Steinschneider, *Cat. Lugd.*, 25; Pinsker, p. 85; Munk, l. c., p. 109), but it is known that this Karaite commentary is only an extract from Jefeth (vid. Pinsker, p. 80).

לם ננר אביב אנהם קר אכטו אלטלם ולם ינרו אלחקיקה לאן אלנבי מא
קאלה לא בִּד מן אן יכון . . .¹

Deut. xxv. 4.

וקו' בריושו לים יריר בה לא תכטמה פי חאל ריאסה פינזו אן יכטם
קבל אלדיאס וידכל אלי אלדיאס מכטומא ואנמא יריר בה לא יכון מכטום
פי חאל מא הו פי אלדיאס וכדאך קו' אללה לא תבערו אש בכל מושבותיכם
ביום השבת לים יריר אן לא ישעל אלנאר פי אלסבת וינזו אן תשעל קבל
אלסבת ותבקא פי אלסבת ואנמא יריר בה אן לא תכון אלנאר משתעלה
פי יום אלסבת וקד זעם בעץ אלמצלין אן בינהמא פרק ודכר דלך פי כתאבה
אלמלקב בכתאב אלחמיז פקאל אן אלפרק בינהמא הו אן טפי אלנאר
פי אלסבת חראם כאשעאלהא ולים חאל אלכטאם פי אלדיאס חראם
בשדה . . .²

Deut. xxxiii. 18.

. . . וארי אן אדכר בריא מא דכרה אלכצם ואסתדל עלי אן אלעבור
מסתעמל ביד ישראל קרימא קאל הוא אלמצל לנפסה בריא פי כתאבה
אלמלקב בכתאב אלחמיז בל ראית אלנץ ישיר אלי אנה האהנא
עלמא . . .³

I Sam. xx. 27.

. . . פאמא מא דכרה אלפיומי פי כתאבה אלמלקב בכתאב אלחמיז
אן קולה ולא אכל ביום החדש השני לחם ידל עלי תצדיק ארבאנין דון
גירחם מן פרק אליהוד אלדין לא יתבתון יומין ראם אלשהר פאן פי מא
דכרנאה מן אלביאן יסקט קולה וקד אוסענא אלרד עליה פי כתבנא
מנהא פי בראשית ומנהא פי וזאת הברכה ופי ספר המצות פלדלך אכתצרנא
ען אעארתה פי הוא אלמוצע.⁴

The first point to be observed is the calm tone which

¹ The text seems to be incorrect here. The words וינרו לה make it appear as if Saadiah addresses himself to a particular person. The whole passage is perhaps taken from the polemic against Ibn Saquje, which Jefeth here also cites (vid. infra).

² This argument of the Karaites was also refuted by Saadiah in his Commentary to Ex. xxxv. 3 (cited by Jefeth, ad loc.). Cf. also Ibn Ezra, *Mibchar* and *Keter Torah*, ad loc.

³ Follows the same passage again as to Gen. i. 14 and xlix. 14.

⁴ Cf. Pinsker, 183. Jefeth alludes here undoubtedly to the Commentary to Gen. i. 14 and Deut. xxxiii. 18.

prevails all through, and this work bears, altogether, the character of defence rather than of attack. The few passages that are preserved show also that almost all points of divergence between Rabbanites and Karaites were discussed in it; thus, questions referring to the calendar (Jefeth to Gen. i. 14, xlix. 14; Exod. xii. 1; Lev. xxiii. 5; Deut. xvi. 1, xxxiii. 18; 1 Sam. xx. 27) which must have formed the greatest portion of the controversial matter; further, questions about the lighting of light on Sabbath (Jefeth to Deut. xxv. 4, and Ibn Ezra to Exod. xxxv. 3); about the date of the Feast of Weeks (Jefeth to Lev. xxiii. 15), and about the validity of the Tradition (Moses Ibn Ezra). According to Steinschneider, it was particularly Salmon b. Jerucham and Jeshua b. Jehuda, that wrote against this work. In reference to the latter, we possess only a small part of his comments against Saadiah, and of Salmon b. Jerucham, I have already shown that he probably did no such thing. Grätz's opinion that this work of Saadiah's was a reply to Salmon's attacks, I have already shown, both from historical and chronological data, to be impossible¹.

3. Another anti-Karaite work of Saadiah, of which it is not known, when it was written, is the **כתאב אלרד עלי אבן סקריה**, "Writing in confutation of Ibn Saqûje (or Sâqeveihi)." I know of only authors that quote this work by name. Firstly, the above-mentioned Mebasser Hallevi in his controversy against Saadiah: **ופי כתאב רד"ה עלי אבן סאקיה**: קאל אן נטם אלידי עייתי פשעתי חטאתי הו קול ר' מאיר ואמא סאיר²; secondly, by Moses

¹ Cf. JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, VIII, 689, 690.

² Communicated by Harkavy in the *Zapiski* (Memoirs of the Oriental section of the Russian Archaeological Society), 1891, p. 208. It is, of course, difficult to say in which connexion Saadiah treated this theme. In Isaac ibn Gajjath's *Halachoth* (דערי שמוחה, ed. Bamberger, 62) we read: כיצד היה מתורה אנה השם עייתי פשעתי וחטאתי לפניך דברי ר' מאיר וחז"ל השאיתי עייתי ששעתי . . . בהלכות פסק כרבנן . . . ורב (אך רב 1.) חפץ וזכר רב סעריה פסק (פסקו 1.) כר' מאיר וכו'. May perhaps Ibn Gajjath have had our writing of Saadiah's

Ibn Ezra in his *להדיקא*¹; and, thirdly, by Jefeth b. 'Ali in three places in his commentary on the Pentateuch, namely:—(1) To Exod. xii. 2: וקר ק"ר ראם אלמתיבה פי אלכתאב אלדי ר"ד פיה עלי בן סאקויה אן אלואויל כאנו יעברו סנתהם עלי אלביב וגירה והו אלפירות ואלתקופות אלך. (2) To Lev. xxiii. 5 (second recension), after the passage cited above on p. 249, in which it is said that Saadiah had himself admitted that, according to some Rabbanites, the origin of the Calendar was of a later date: ולקר אק"ר אלפיומי בהוא אלקול אלדי תענב מנה: (3) To Deut. xvi. 1: ולקר אק"ר צאחב הוא אלקול פי כתאב אלר"ד עלי אבן סאקויה וועם אן² אלביב הו אצל תעמל עליה אלכבאים מתל אלתקופות אלך. It is evident that this work did not exclusively deal with the importance of the ripening of the ears (מציאת האביב) when a month had to be superadded, as Pinsker (p. מנ) assumed³. Yet, it appears that this theme was here dealt with at length, and Munk's conjecture⁴, that a passage, cited by Abraham b. Chija from an anti-Karaite work of Saadiah, was taken from this particular book, gains in probability. This is the passage (ספר העבור, p. 94): אבל הגאון הגדול רבינו: סעדיה ז"ל דבר בזה הענין על דרך אחרת בספר אשר חבר להשיב על המינים אמר כך אחד מן המינים טען עלינו בהלכה זו והיא ת"ר אין מעברין את השנה אא"כ היתה התקופה חסרה רובו של חדש וכמה רובו של חדש י"ז יום . . . ואמר המין הזה אתה מוצא אם כן מן ההלכה הזאת ארבעה שיעורים . . . השיבו ר' סעדיה ז"ל ואמר אין זה מחלוקת ביניהם וכו'.

before him? In a *responsum* of Sherira's on this theme (שובות גאון מורח) Saadiah is not mentioned. Cp. also Saadiah's *Oeuvres complètes*, IX, 154, note 1.

¹ Vid. supra. In another place of this writing of his, Moses Ibn Ezra names Ibn Saqûje together with Chivi al-Balchi; vid. Harkavy, *הרש"ם*, VII, 33.

² Cf. also supra.

³ Cp. also the words of the Karaite Chronicler Ibn al-Hiti (JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, IX, 435): ובן סקויה רח א"ר ר"ד עלי ארבעאנן ועלי אלפיומי פי (cf. *Zeitschr. f. hebr. Bibliogr.* II, 79).

⁴ *Additions*, p. 112.

We see that the question is here also about the intercalary month. Suppose this passage had been taken from the כתאב אלתמיז, Abraham b. Chija would not have omitted quoting that book by name (ספר ההכרה), as he does on another occasion (vid. supra, p. 245).

We do not know who this Ibn Saqûje was¹, but so much is certain that he was a Karaite, and this is sufficient to refute Lebrecht's assumption, that he was identical with the Exilarch David ben Zakkai². Pinsker is of opinion that the first name of this Karaite was Samuel, but this assumption is, as was shown already, based upon a misunderstood and badly translated passage of Joseph al-Baṣīr's כתאב אלא סתבצאר³. In the same way, I consider Geiger's hypothesis to be highly improbable, according to which סאקוי was the Arabic name of Salmon ben Jerucham, and this work identical with another anti-Karaite work by Saadia, quoted by Nissim b. Jacob (נמצי נעמני), Hebrew part, fol. 16 b), namely:—

4. (ספר ?) כתאב אלרד עלי מתחמל היום (?), (התשובה על הטוען ששאלת לענן מה שנמצא בדברי חכמינו ז"ל מן התיבות (?), "Book of refutation of the attacking writer" (?). Apart from historical and chronological data, the contents of these books make it impossible to declare them to be one and the same. We have seen that the other book dealt chiefly with the subject of the Calendar, whilst the subject of this book was, probably, only the anthropomorphic Agada. This follows from Nissim's words: ומה ששאלת לענן מה שנמצא בדברי חכמינו ז"ל מן התיבות (?), הנה על צורה מה שנחשב עליהם בדבר זה כבר רבי סעדיה ז"ל דבר על זה בפיו (בפ' 1.) ובחיבורו דברים משנים (?), ושלמים ובספר התשובה על הטוען הנקרא בלשון ישמעאל בתאב (כתאב 1.) אורד (אלרד 1.) עלי מתחמל היום פי' זה וביאורו

¹ The ending ייה need not, by any means, point to Persia as his home. In Nöldeke (*Persische Studien*, in the *Sitzungsberichte d. Wiener Akademie*, 1888, p. 399 sqq.), and Justi (*Iranisches Namenbuch*, Marburg, 1895), I have not found the name סאקוי. Cf. also my essay on Meswi al-Okbari in the *Revue des Études Juives*, XXXIV, 161, note 2.

² *Ltbl. d. Orient*, I, 131. Cf. Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl.*, 2168.

³ Vid. *Jewish Quarterly Review*, VIII, 690.

בטענות מפורשות מפורסמות וראיות מקיימות שמסירות הספקות ודוחות 'הרמינות וכו'. This book is, without doubt, the same as the one cited by Jehuda b. Barzilai in two places of his Commentary on Jezira (ed. Halberstam, pp. 20, 34). In the former passage it is said expressly, that a heretic asserted of the Talmudists, that they attributed to the Creator form and shape, and that Saadiah, in a book written for the purpose, refuted these attacks. By these heretics he means, of course, Karaites, for none of them, from Qirqisâni and Salmon b. Jerucham till Mordechai b. Nissan and Abraham Firkowitsch, fail to attack the Talmudists, on the ground of anthropomorphic passages of the Agada, which they take in their literal meaning, induced thereto either by ignorance or malice. And these very two passages of the Agada, the interpretation of which are cited by Jehuda b. Barzilai, were attacked by the two older Karaites, named before. The one (p. 20), about the vision of Ishmael, mentioned in Berachot, 7 a, is quoted by Salmon b. Jerucham¹, the other (p. 34), about the passage מניין שהקב"ה מתפלל, is quoted by this author², and by Qirqisâni³. But it must be observed that, whilst Qirqisâni directs his attacks against the Rabbanites in general, Salmon, in his flippant way, attacks Saadiah personally, and makes him responsible for whatever he finds fault with. I have already said that Saadiah wrote this pamphlet after the *Emunoth*, and therefore after 933⁴.

5. Ibn Ezra makes, in two passages of his commentary, mention of a dispute of Saadiah with the otherwise unknown Ben Zuta. The first passage (Exod. xxi. 24) deals with the *lex talionis*, and the second (Lev. xxiii. 15,

¹ Cap. 15, letter ב.

² Ibid., letter ג.

³ *Kitâb al-'Anwâr*, I, 4 (ed. Harkavy, p. 298). Cf. also Hadassi's *Eshkol Hakkofer*, Alphab. 78, letter ח; Alphab. 81, letter י.

⁴ Vid. JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, VIII, 691. Cf. also Kaufmann, *Gesch. d. Attributenlehre*, p. 61. On the theme of the created light, as treated by Saadiah, vid. Epstein, דיוקן, II, 37 sqq., to which the passages in Jehuda b. Barzilai, pp. 119, 175, are to be added. Cp. also יענים גם יענים, X, pp. 17, 50.

in the fragment of a second recension in Friedländer's *Essays on the writings of Abraham Ibn Ezra*, Hebrew Appendix, p. 70) with the frequently discussed phrase ממחרת השבת. It cannot be inferred from either passage that Saadiah had written a book against that Karaite, the former rather leads to the conclusion that there was no more than a verbal discussion. עין תחת עין אמר רב סעדיה לא נוכל לפרש זה הפסוק כמשמעו . . . אמר לו בן זימא והלא כתוב במקום אחר כאשר יתן מום באדם כן יתן בו והגאון השיב לו יש לנו בי"ת תחת על . . . ובן זימא השיב לו . . . והגאון השיב . . . ובן זימא השיב . . . והגאון השיב . . . Ben Zuta not being quoted by any of the Karaite writers, it is probable that the source of Ibn Ezra was Saadiah, and most likely the latter's commentary on the Pentateuch. I shall endeavour to show in another place that Ibn Ezra's other quotations of Ben Zuta's opinions (Commentary to Exod. ii. 2, xx. 23, xxi. 35, xxii. 28; *ספר העבור* f. 7a) were all taken from Saadiah, and that all of them were subjects of controversy between the latter and the former¹.

6. Besides the above-mentioned special writings, Saadiah combated the Karaites also in his large commentary on the Pentateuch. He says, in the preface to his second translation of the Pentateuch, with so many words, that he was asked to reproduce the simple meaning of the words of Scripture, without linguistic digressions or polemics against the heretics². As a matter of fact, some remnants of Saadiah's polemic, taken from that commentary, have been preserved. Salmon, in his controversy, informs us that Saadiah had produced, in his commentary on Genesis, seven proofs of the necessity and divine character of the Tradition³. Jefeth ben 'Ali also cites

¹ Vid. my "Miscellanies on Saadiah," II (*Monatsschrift*, XLI, 203-212), where the proofs can be found for all that is brought forward here.

² Ed. Derenbourg, p. 4: לאן בעץ ארזאגבן סאלני אן אפרד בסיש נץ אלתורה פי: 4: ולא ידלל פיה קול מן מסאיל אלמלחדין כתאב מפרד לא ישיבה שי מן אלכלאם פי אללגה . . . ולא מן אלרד עליהם אלך. Cf. *Monatsschrift*, XLI, 205.

³ Vid. Geiger's *Wissensch. Zeitschr. für jüd. Theol.*, V, 133.

anti-Karaite passages from Saadiah's commentary, e.g. Gen. i. 14, viii. 9; Exod. iii. 2, xii. 2, 16, xxi. 33, xxiii. 15, xxxv. 3; Deut. xvi. 9, &c.¹ We learn from a *Responsum* of Hai Gaon, that Saadiah maintained in his commentary that the constant calendar was of remote antiquity, in doing which he failed not to contradict the Karaites². Tobia b. Moses, in his *אוצר נחמד*, cites a passage from Saadiah's commentary to Exod. xxiv. 12, in which the divine character of the Mishna and Talmud is vindicated³, and another passage from the commentary to Leviticus, in which the Karaite notions about prohibited fat are confuted⁴. Moses ibn Ezra communicates, in his *Art of Poetry*, a passage from Saadiah's commentary to the section *קדושים*, in which 'Anân's method in reference to the application of the inference by analogy (*היקש*, *קיאם*) is combated⁵. Finally, we have already pointed out the probability that many controversial passages against 'Anân, and also against Ben Zuta, were contained in the commentary on the Pentateuch.

7. Saadiah, in his philosophical work, cites, it is true, an opinion of 'Anân and Benjamin-al-Nahawendi, which he confutes⁶, but without any polemical heat, and, on the whole, he abstains in that work from all controversy with the Karaites. Of only two passages, in which he speaks of the opinions of "people who call themselves Jews," or "who are called Jews" (*יְהוּדִים יָקוּם מִמֶּן יִתְּמֹן*) (*באליהוריה*), I believe that I have shown that a section of the

¹ Cf. Munk, l. c., 104 sqq.

² Vid. *Responses of the Geonim*, ed. Lyck, No. 1: *כי ר"ם וז"ל כתב בפירושו כי אין ספק מעיקרא אלא הקב"ה ציוה את משה עברו והוא אמר להם לישראל כי בארץ יהיה להם יום אחד ובחול"ל שני ימים וכן היו מעולם כל ישראל עושין . . . כן ראינו כי זה שאמרתם שכתב ר"ם וז"ל קנה הוא שרצה את אפיקורוס וכו'.*

³ MS. Bodl., Opp. fol. 26, f. 96 a: *הדיושה אשר תזכור אותה היא אצלך המשנה והתלמוד וזולתם מן ספרי הרבנים והדומה להם כאשר זכור (וכתר I.) בפתר' פסוק עלה אלי ההרה והיה שם זכור.*

⁴ Vid. Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl.*, 2168.

⁵ Vid. *supra*, p. 244.

⁶ Ed. Slucki, pp. 96, 100; ed. Landauer, pp. 190, 201.

Karaites were alluded to¹. The assumption that the second version of the seventh chapter, on the resurrection of the dead, on which Ibn Tibbon's translation was based, was directed specially against the same portion of the Karaites is, as recently shown by Bacher², plausible enough. Yet, as already said, a direct controversy against the Karaites is not to be found in the work. Several scholars have tried to explain this circumstance. Thus Kaufmann³ believes the absence of all controversy to be attributable to Saadiah's consideration of Mahomedan readers, to whom he wished to represent Judaism as an undivided unit, without schism. But this suggestion is unacceptable, because controversy, both against Islam and against erroneous exegetical doctrines within Judaism, is by no means a rare thing in *Emunoth*⁴. More plausible is Guttmann's view⁵, adopted also by Bacher, that there was no room in *Emunoth* for any polemic against the Karaites, in as far as the latter were in accord with the Rabbanites on the fundamental ideas that form the subject of the book. But this explanation is not quite satisfactory either, for the belief in the divine origin of the Tradition was to Saadiah a fundamental principle also. We shall have to rest for the present without an explanation. But the work mentioned above, under No. 4, and which was written after *Emunoth*, shows that Saadiah, even when advanced in years, had not lost his readiness for controversy.

8. As far as I have found, no controversy against the Karaites occurs in the other, still extant, writings of Saadiah's. It is true that Schechter⁶ suggested that Saadiah's

¹ Vid. my "Miscellanies on Saadiah," I (*Monatsschrift*, XXXIX, 441-446).

² *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, p. 224.

³ *Gesch. d. Attributenlehre*, p. 80 sqq. Cf. also *Revue des Études Juives*, XXVII, 271.

⁴ Vid. Bacher, *Die Bibelepexese d. jüd. Religionsphilos. vor Maimuni*, pp. 35-44.

⁵ *Die Religionsphilosophie d. Saadia*, p. 29, note 1; cf. also *ibid.*, p. 17, note 1; p. 155, note 1.

⁶ *Beth Talmud*, IV, 237. Cf. also the preface of the late Joel Müller to his edition of this commentary of Saadiah in the *Œuvres complètes*, Vol. IX.

commentary on the Thirteen Rules of R. Ishmael may have had an anti-Karaite tendency, but this conjecture is not supported by a single passage of the book. The assumption is all the more improbable, since both 'Anân and his followers also applied those rules¹. As for Saadiah's lost works, the following may have contained anti-Karaite passages:—

(a) ספר עריות. Nothing is known of this book, except a rather lengthy quotation in the book with the same title by Jeshua ben Jehuda, first completely edited by Steinschneider in the magazine *מגן ירחים*, III, 76, and, again, partly in *Cat. Bodl.*, 2163². In this passage, Saadiah also rejects the application of the Analogy (היקש, קיאם) to the prohibited marriages, a method of which the Karaites made constant use. I also conjectured before, under No. 1, that Saadiah's polemic against incest was perhaps contained in that book.

(b) On the margin of a MS. in Oxford (Cod. Pococke, 256, Cat. Neubauer, 1533), a work of Saadiah is quoted under the title of כתאב אלקיאם עלי אלשראיע אלסמעיה, which Lebrecht designates, without any foundation, as an apologetical and polemical work³. But Steinschneider correctly identifies it as Saadiah's work כתאב תחזיל אלשראיע אלסמעיה, quoted by Moses ibn Ezra⁴, and it is, without doubt, identical with the כתאב אלשראיע mentioned in the Fihrist. Several conjectures were made in respect to that work, and Bacher proposed to identify it with the *Kitāb al-'amanāt*⁵. Munk's opinion appears to be the only correct one, namely, that it was a compendium of laws (ספר המצות),

¹ Vid. *Steinschneider-Festschrift*, p. 208.

² The whole passage was also reprinted with explanatory notes by Joel Müller in Saadiah's *Œuvres complètes*, I. c., pp. 171-173.

³ Vid. Munk, *Notice sur Saadja*, p. 14.

⁴ Vid. Steinschneider, I. c., 2166.

⁵ Ed. Kokowzow (Specimen in *Wostotchnija Zamjetki*), p. 219, where, however, one line in the quotation from Saadiah is missing. Vid. my remark in the *Zeitschr. f. hebr. Bibliogr.*, I, 30, note 6.

⁶ *Abbr. ibn Ezra's Einleit. zu s. Pentateuchcomm.*, p. 20.

and this view has become more probable through a recently discovered citation from the same book, communicated by Neubauer¹. Although no anti-Karaite matter occurs in either of these quotations, yet it is more than likely that Saadiah had in this book frequent opportunities of defending the Tradition and attacking the Karaites.

(c) כתאב אלעבור והו אלחארין. This work is also mentioned in Fihrist, and its subject was, as the title shows, probably, the Knowledge of the Calendar and the Jewish Chronology. The little we know about it was collected by Rapoport², Luzzatto³, and Steinschneider⁴. The work being quoted mostly by authors who wrote in Hebrew, none of whom mentioned its title, Luzzatto is of opinion, that Saadiah had written it in Hebrew, under the title of ספר העבור, a name which Ibn Nedim translated into Arabic by כתאב אלעבור, to which he added והו אלחארין, for the better understanding of his Arabic readers⁵. Luzzatto further assumes that the book was unknown to Abraham b. Chija, since he never quotes it. In the absence of fuller information, nothing positive can be asserted; yet it must be observed that Ibn Bal'âm, in his Arabic commentary to 1 Kings vi. 1, reproduces a passage from Saadiah's כתאב אלחארין, which certainly deals with chronology⁶. It is also more than probable that the passage quoted by Abraham b. Chija in name of Isaak b. Baruch was, as the contents show, taken from this book. The כתאב אלחמין could also be thought of in this connexion, but Abraham b. Chija would not, in that case, have omitted quoting it by name, as he knew this book

¹ JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, VI, 707. It is certainly possible, also, that the words אלשראיע פי כתאבה פי ענה קאל cited there, do not allude to Saadiah, but to פראקן, who is also mentioned there.

² *Biography of Saadiah*, note 23.

³ *Orient*, XII, 101-103; 132-134.

⁴ *Cat. Bodl.*, 2170. Cf. also הינה, 19; *Bibliotheca Mathematica*, 1894, 103.

⁵ It is also possible that Saadiah himself gave his book a Hebrew and an Arabic title, as with the ספר האגרון. Vid. also, for other instances, Harkavy, חרשים גם ישינים, VII, 15.

⁶ Cited by Neubauer, *Mediaeval Jewish Chronicles*, II, p. xi.

of Saadiah, a passage from which he cites, under the title of ספר ההכרה. It follows, at all events, that the כתאב אלעבור was no longer known to Abraham b. Chija. If we do not assume that Ibn Bal'âm had translated the Hebrew title into Arabic, his citation leads to the conclusion that Saadiah wrote this, like all his other works, in Arabic. Rashi's quotation, Rosh Hashana, 20 b¹, proves nothing, for he either may have quoted from a Hebrew extract, or he may have meant another book². Nor are there any sufficient grounds for explaining why Saadiah should have written this particular book in Hebrew³. The Genizot in Egypt, which constantly supply fresh surprises, will perhaps still throw some light on this matter, and we have, perhaps, even now already a fragment of this work before us. It is, at any rate, more than probable, that Saadiah combated the Karaites in this very book, since questions in connexion with the knowledge of the Calendar are, so to say, the *perpetuum mobile* in the polemics between Saadiah and the Karaites.

9. We have seen that all Saadiah's anti-Karaite writings, with the exception of a few scanty fragments, are lost without leaving any trace. But a little fragment from one of them may, perhaps, have been rescued, namely, two loose sheets, contained in a Codex of Fragments in the Bodleian Library (MS. Hebr. 45, fol. 1-2), and which have come from Egypt, like all recent acquisitions made by the Library. I shall first communicate both text and translation of these two sheets,

¹ כן ראיתי ביסודו של רבינו סעדיה ז"ל.

² The same is the case with the נקד דרב סעדיה, cited by Rashi to Ps. xlv. 10.

³ In regard to those books of Saadiah that were written in Hebrew, we also know a reason for their having been composed in that language; thus, the ספר הדגלי and the ספר המועדים, because Saadiah wished to present them in Biblical garb, with vowel-points and accents (vid. Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mittheil.*, V, 133 sqq., 212 sqq.). He could not have written his polemic against Chivi al-Balchi in Arabic, vid. the quotation from Bachja's *Ma'ani al-nafs*, in *Revue des Études Juives*, XXV, 249 (cf., on this point, Kaufmann, *ibid.*, XXVII, 271; in Broydé's translation of תרומת הנפש, p. 20, ערביה must be altered into עבריה, and עבריה into ערביה. Cf. also *Monatsschrift*, XLI, 247, note 1).

and then proceed to give the arguments that induced me to set up this hypothesis.

• • • [I a] לחד מן היה דבר ¹ ביד¹ חגי הנביא לאמר פתוהם עלי מא סבך אלי טנה אן קולה ביום עשרים וארבעה לחדש בששי הו² בשביעי בעשרים ואחד לחדש והו יום ואחד מנסוב אלי שהרין פנעל³ אלשהר אלאול מנסובא אלי שהור⁴ אלשמס ואלשהר אלתאני מנסובא אלי שהור אלקמר ולם יעלם אן יום עשרים וארבעה לים הו יום עשרים ואחד ואנמא המא יומאן מכתלפאן מן שהרין מתואליין ופי כל ואחד מנהמא פעל גיר אלאכר והו אן קולה ביום עשרים וארבעה מוצולא במא קאל קבלה ויבאו ויעשו מלאכה בבית ⁵ צבאות אלהיהם וכאן אול מא אבתרו באלבנא פי ארבעה ועשרין מן אלול פאקאמו עלי תלך אלחאל אלי ואחד ועשרין מן תשרי פלמא כאן יום ואחד ועשרין מן תשרי והו יום ערבה קאל אללה לחגי קל להם מי בכם הנשאר אשר ראה את הבית הזה בכבודו הראשון ומה אתם ראים אתו עתה הלוא כמוהו כאין בעיניכם פקר אוצחנא אן ביום עשרים וארבעה יקתצי מא קבלה ויום ואחד ועשרין יקתצי מא בעדה ואנכסר קול מן זעלהמא יומא ואחדא⁶ ובנא לה מדהבא עלי שבהה צעיפה⁷ ואמא אלחפליסי וגירה מן אהל זמאננא היא ממן אקד באלחסאב לכנה ארעי אן וקת נהאיה דקאיק כל שהר הו יום תרתיבה פאן אלנקץ עליה סהל ודלך אנה רגל מסתדל⁸ לים נאקל פאדא קיל לה מן אין קלת היא אלקול לא גואב לה ולאצחאבה⁹ אכתר מן אן יקול אשבהה באלצבי אלדי אדא ולד וקד בקי מן אלנהאר דקיקה נחסב לה דלך אליום יומא תאמא ויכתן [I b] פי מתלה וכדלך אלגדה תרי פי אכר יום ויחסב להא יום תאם¹⁰ וכדלך גמיע אלטמאות ולכצומה אן יקולו לה קבל אלמקאיסה אכברנא מא דלילך עלי וקת אלנהאיה ומא עלמך ען¹¹ כמייה אלשהר [אלתי] הי הדה אלחסעה ועשרין יומא ונצוף והדה אלכסור פאנה לא חילה לה ילנא אליהא אלא אחד תלתה אמור אמא אן ירעי פי דלך מן אלמקרא ולא יגד פיה שיא מנה או¹² ירעי אעתיבאר אלרצד ואלמחן אלתי אכרנא אלמננמן והוא חסאב לא ימצי עלי שי מן אקואל אלמננמן לאנה לם ישארכה וסט מסר אלקמר ולא מסירה אלמעל פקד כרנ מן צנעה אלננן¹³ ולים לה אלא אלונה אלחאלת והו אן יקול כדא נקלוה בנו אסראיל ען אלרסול פאדא הו צאר אלי היא אלקול קיל לה

¹ MS. אל.² MS. המור.³ MS. פנעל.⁴ MS. אלשהור.⁵ MS. ואחדה.⁶ MS. צעפא.⁷ MS. ולא צחאבה.⁸ MS. חאני.⁹ MS. אן.¹⁰ MS. אי.¹¹ MS. אלננס.

פאן נאקליה יועמון אן אלרסול אמרנא באלענאיה בנהאיה גמלה אלסנה
אלי ראם תשרי לנמתל פיהא חלך אלשרוט ובין לנא אנא לא נבאלי במא
סוי דלך מן אלשהור תקדם או תאכר פאן כאנת יהודיא¹ תסנר אלי הדי
אלנקלה² פהיא קולהא וועמהא ואן כאן לך נאקלון אכר פדלנא עליהם חתי
נעתברהם ודלך מא לא יגדה פאדיא לם ימכנה אקאמה אלברהאן עלי דעואה
סקטת ואסתגנינא ען קיאסה וען נקצה ופי אלאמה צנף אכר פי
עצרנא הדיא יעידון עלי אלאהלה ויועמון אנהם עלי מואהב אלרבונין ואן
אלאויל מן אלרבונין כאנת הדיא חאלהם ואנהם כאנו ינאדון פי אלאמה
פיסתחצרון אלשהור³ אלדין ראו אלהלאל ויסאלונהם ען דלך תם אדיא צחת
להם אלשהאדה קדסו וקאלו מקודש וכאנו איצא אדיא צחת להם רייתה
אשעלו . . .

. . . [2 a] ואן לם יכן מן האולי ולא האולי אלא אנה יקד באלמקרא
פאלכלאם עליה מתונה⁴ אכתר מן אלנמיע ודלך אן פי אלמקרא מן הדיא
כתיר דלך קול⁵ אלנבא אם אסק שמים שם אתה וג' ומחאל אלצעוד אלי
אלסמא וקול אללה אם יחתרו בשאול וג' וממתנע אלאכתפא פי אלחרי
וקולה לעשו אם תגביה כנשר ואם בין כוכבים שים קנך וג' וקולה ליכניהו [כי]
אם יהיה כניהו בן יהויקים מלך יהודה חותם על יד ימיני וקולה אם יעמד משה
ושמואל לפני ומחאל קיאמהמא אלא באדנה וכמא וצף נגעים פי אלמנאול
ונגעים פי אלתיאב והי גיר מונודה ואנמא הדיא אלאקואל כלהא מבאלנה
ותנאחי פי אלמעני כדאך קו אלחכ זכ לב הדיא אלאקואל פי אלמשנה תנאיי
ותבאלג פי אלקול ליערפו חכם מא ימא פי דלך ואנמא אחבת האנהא קול
אלמנטקין ואלגדליין לאפהם אן גמיע אלנאם קד אתפק פי אלכוץ פי
אלמבאלנה ואלתנאחי פי אלאשיא ועלי אן דלך גיר מונוד פרד עלי מן
יטען עלי אלחכמים ואדחץ דעואה. והדיא אלפריק כתירא מא יסאל מא
באלניסן⁶ לא יקע פי בדי פנקול פי דלך אולא קולא מן גהה אלנקל ואדיא
אכטרתה עלי באלך וגדתה צחיחא והו אן אלדליל אלדי נצבה אללה לידלנא
עלי רצאה מא הו פי אמר מרחשון וכסלו וכל סנה למא כאן יקטע איאם
אלנמעא קטעא גיר מתסאוויה ויחכם לכל ואחדה מנהא בחכם מא וצפנא

¹ MS. יאדרא.² MS. אלנקלה.³ MS. אלשהור.⁴ MS. מתנה. Cf. Dozy, s. v.: "ce discours ne s'adresse pas à lui."⁵ MS. בקול.⁶ Perhaps אלניסן. למא דא אלניסן. The whole passage seems to be somewhat corrupt.

צארת אלשהור תמרד בעצהא בעצהא פילחק כל ואחד אין מא לחק דלך לאן אלמרתב בעד מא יתבת היין אלשהרין עלי חאל [2 b] מא פלא חילה לה פי באקי אלשהור בעד דלך בוידרה ולא נקצאן לאן אלעשרה אלבאקיה מחכמה פלמא כאן אלמאר כדאך בטל קול מן זעם אן ניסן או תשרי ירחיאן¹ לכנה הו חסאב לא ינאהי ניסן אלי איאם אזואג בל אלי איאם פראד והו אנהו ומתאל דלך כאלכמסין אלתי לא תטיק אן תקסמהא עלי סבעה אפראדא אברא או כאלכמסה ועשרין אלתי לא ימכנך אן תקסמהא עלי ארבעה אזואגא אברא לאן אלחסאב ימתנע מן אכראג דלך באלטבע כדאך הוה אלחסאב² ימתנע מן מנאהאג ניסן אלי אליאם אלאזואג באלטבע אלדי לה. ואקול פיה בעד דלך קולא אכר מן גהה אלכתאב ודלך באן אקדם קבלה מקדמה עלי מדהבנא ואקול אן כל פריץ נולה אללה קבל פריץ פלם יגו אן יאתי אלתאני פינקין אלאול בל לא יקע אלתאני אלא עלי מא לס ידכל תחת אלאול דלך כאלמילה אלתי הי קבל אלסבת פאמרנא אללה אן נכתן כל יום פלמא אמר בעד דלך באלסבת כאן לא יקע עלי אלמילה אלמאמור בהא כל יום פינסכהא וכאלקרבן עולה איצא אלמפתריץ קבל אלסבת כאן נקרב בכל יום פלא יגו אן ימנעה אלסבת פאלפסח איצא אפרץ קבל אלסבת יגב פלדלך יגב פעלה פי אלסבת ואמא מא נול מן אלשראיע בעד אלסבת פלא יגו פעלה פיהא אלבתה חם נקול אנא ראינא אללה עו וגל קד רסם לנא פי אלמועדות שראיעא לא ב"ד מן פעלהא פלם ירסמהא פי תלך אלאוקאת אלא לעלמה אנהא לא תקע פי סבת פנמנע³ מן פעלהא אז הי מן בעדה שרעת פמן האהנא נעלם אן אלחסאב אלדי עלמנאה רסולה הו . . .

" . . . [1 a] His error lay in the verse : ' The word of God came by the prophet Haggai, saying ' (Hag. ii. 1), and he erroneously thought, as we said already, that both dates 'the 24th of the sixth month' (ibid. i. 15) and 'the 21st of the seventh month' (ibid. ii. 1) were identical, and referred to two different sorts of months. He thought the former to refer to the solar, and the latter to the lunar month. But he did not know, that these two dates, the 24th and the 21st, are two different days, falling in two consecutive months, and that a different event occurred on each of them. For the words 'on the 24th' [&c.] are the continuation of the preceding verse : 'and they came and did

¹ Perhaps ירחיאן.² MS. אחסאב.³ MS. סימנע.

work in the house of the Lord Zebaoth their God' (i. 14). Thus, they commenced building on the 24th of Elul, and continued till the 21st of Tishri. On that very day, the day of the 'Arāba, God said to Haggai: 'Speak to them: Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory, and how do you see it now, is it not in your eyes as nothing?' (ii. 3). We have thus made it clear that the 24th of Elul must refer to the preceding verse, but the 21st of Tishri refers to that which follows. The words of him, therefore, who considers these two dates to mean the same day, and who bases his opinion upon doubtful and weak arguments, are of no value¹.

"Now Tiffîsi—and many of his contemporaries follow him—keeps to the reckoning of the Calendar; only, he thinks that the end of the minutes of every month was, at the same time, the day of the order [of the new month?]².

¹ This passage seems to be directed against the assertion that the Bible reckons also according to the solar months. Jehuda ha-Parsi is here perhaps alluded to, who taught that we had to reckon by solar months, as mentioned by Ibn Ezra (Introduction to the Commentary on the Pentateuch; Comm. to Gen. viii. 3; Exod. xii. 1; Lev. xxv. 9; Sefer ha-Ibbur, 8 a; Iggeret ha-Shabbath, in *Kerem Chemed*, IV, 163). Ibn Ezra does not, however, quote the proof from Hag. i. 15 and ii. 1. It is remarkable that the older Karaites inform us, that among the Sadducees every month had thirty days, and that they, consequently, had solar months, thus, e. g. al-Qirgisāni, *Kitāb al-'anwār*, I, 7 (ed. Harkavy, p. 304; and, probably, thence Hadassi, Alphab. 97, letter נ), Jefeth to Lev. xxiii. 5: דומי עמם: (אין ק' אלצורקיה) אנהם כאנו יחבתון שהורחם שמסיה לא קמרייה אלך to return to this subject.

² The name of this sectarian was Mûsa al-Zafrāni, or 'Abû 'Imrân at-Tiflisi. He was from Bagdad, and emigrated to Tiflis. Vid. about him, Qirgisāni, ed. Harkavy, pp. 285, 315 (Hadassi, Alphab. 98, letter ז, has, incorrectly, אבועמן). His theory, according to which the day of the conjunction belongs alone to the new month, and which is refuted here, is briefly mentioned by Qirgisāni: באנה כמן יחכר רחם אלשהר מנז אול אלים אלזי חקע פיה אלמפארקה; and more fully by Jefeth to Gen. i. 14. He first makes some remarks which are of general interest: וזרת אלממה וזן אנתלפת עלי וזרה שתי פמנהא לא תכרז מן וזהין אחד אלחטאב ואלז אלזויה ואלקאלין בחסאב אנקסמו עלי קסמן פמנהם מן זעל חסאבה עלי אלחטאב [אי אנהמאע אלקמר מע אלשמס יום אבתרחא] וזו אבו עמראן אלחפליסי ואצחאבה יאלז חסאב אלרבאנן וזו חסאב

This is easily refuted. For [he bases his assertion] upon arguments, and not upon tradition. To the question 'Whence has he got this opinion?' he and his adherents can only answer that they compared [the month] with a boy born only a minute before the end of the day. That day counts for a whole day, and his circumcision takes place [1 b] on the corresponding [eighth] day. In the same way, if a woman at the time of her menstruation, sees [symptoms] at the end of the day, that day counts for a whole day; the same rule applies to other cases of uncleanness. But his opponents can reply: Before you conclude such analogies, tell us first, what proof you have in regard to the time of the end [of the month], and what do you know about the duration of the month, which is $29\frac{1}{2}$ days and a certain number of parts [of an hour]¹? No artifice remains him wherewith to defend himself, except one of

אלמבני עלי אלמילאד פאמא אלקאלין באלרויה פהו כל פריק כלאף ארבאנן גידה אבו עמראן וחרה ואמא אצחאב אלברר ואלצדוקיה לם יבן אחד מנהם נלחמס אלרד עליה וזוא כאן לים חם קסם מוגור פי ומאננא הוא חזא (אלא הוא r.) אלז לא הכרז ען אן יבן אלקמר . . . פתח נמנע: In reference to Tiflisi, he continues: דליל עלי רווס אלשהור אלך אן יבן אלחסאב מנקולא פאן כאן [כולך] מזדב אבו עמראן אלחפליס פמן אלמעלוס אן חסאבה מחרת ואנה גמע ז ויגאת ואזך מן אלוסט חסאב עמל עליה ואחתז למרהבה בנצוצ לים חתעלק בשי ממא זכרה וזו מא חעלק בקול אלחאב בכסה ליום חגנו וזוא אלנץ ירחמך אלהו הו לזצומה ולא לה לאן קולה בכסה ימשי עלי מזדב אלקאלין ברויה אלהאל אלז' אברא כל ראס שדר מגשא ענהם משרפתה מן קבל אז לים יעלמו הל אלשהר יכרז חסר או מלא הוא ארז פסרנא בכסה אלגשא וקר פסרוה יום אלזביחה וגעלוה מן לגז אלחרגוס וזו חרגוס ושחש פבנא אלהל אצלה עלי הוא אלנץ ואלחמס לה חסאב מן ויגאת אלמנמין לם פאקאם בהא (אי בתפליס) ותאבעה עלי: Thus the former says of him: מזדבה גמאעה דום אלי הוה אלגאיה בהא וליס פי ומאננא הוא גיר חלה מזדבב וזי: 5. Lev. xxiii. The author of the חוק מזדב ארבאנן ומזדב אלחפליס ומזדב אלקאלין באלרויה (Pinsker, p. 100) also says that, at his time, only four sects were still extant, of the fourteen which existed previously: namely, Rabbanites, Karaites, Tifisites, and Meswites (i.e. followers of Meswial-Okbari). Cf. *Revue des Études Juives*, XXXIV, 163.

¹ It is known that the month in the Jewish Calendar has $29\frac{1}{2}$ days and $\frac{793}{1080}$ of an hour, or, as the formula is, כש יז חשנז.

the following three. Either he appeals to the Bible, but there he finds nothing on the subject¹; or he appeals to observation [of the moon] and the consideration [of that which was observed], as the astronomers do. But this calculation [of his] has nothing in common with the astronomers, for it is in harmony, neither with the mean nor with the corrected circuit of the moon; he must therefore leave astronomy alone. Only a third alternative remains him, namely, when he says: 'Thus it was delivered to the Israelites by the Messenger [Moses].' Should he resort to this argument, the answer would be this. The bearers of the tradition maintain on the contrary that the Messenger commanded that we should take care to terminate the whole year at the commencement of Tishri, in order that we utilize here these conditions for the purpose of analogy (?). He has, therefore, made it clear to us, that we need not be concerned about anything [else], in reference to the months which either precede or follow [Tishri]. If you are a Jew, and adhere to these bearers of the tradition, [know] that such is their opinion; but if you have others who transmit a different transmission, quote them to us in order that we may respect them. This he cannot do. But if he can adduce no proof for his assertion, it falls to the ground, and we have enough of his analogies and we need not refute him any further.

"We have in our midst yet another class of people, who regulate their festivals according to the [first appearance of the] new moon, and believe nevertheless that they proceed after the methods of the Rabbanites. [They say] that the first teachers among the Rabbanites proceeded in the same way, that they convened an assembly of the people, and caused witnesses to come, whom they cross-examined. If they approved of the evidence, they sanctified [the new month], and proclaimed: 'Sanctified!' In the same way

¹ We know from Jefeth that Tiflisi quotes Ps. lxxxi. 4 for his theory.

they kindled, when they were certain of the first appearance of the moon . . .¹

" . . . [2 a] but if he belongs neither to this, nor to the other class, but keeps [only] to the Bible, in that case the [present] exposition applies to him more than to all others. For we have in the Bible many similar phrases; for instance, the word of the prophet [David]: 'If I ascend to heaven, thou art there,' &c. (Ps. cxxxix. 8), but it is impossible for anybody to ascend to the heaven; similarly, the word of God: 'Though they dig into grave,' &c. (Am. ix. 2), but it is impossible to hide in the damp; also, the word of God to Esau: 'Though thou mount on high as an eagle and fix thy nest among the stars,' &c. (Obad. 4); also the word to Jechoniah: 'Though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim were the signet upon my right hand' (Jer. xxii. 24); also, 'Were Moses and Samuel to place themselves before me' (ib. xv. 1), but they could place themselves before God only by his permission. In the same way the leprosy of buildings and clothes is described, although it does not occur at all. All such phrases must be taken as hyperbolical expressions, and thus must the dicta of the sages of blessed memory in the Mishna be understood². Namely, the latter wanted only to give [theoretical] decisions in case people would wish [to know them]. In proof I also adduce here the opinions of the logicians and dialecticians, in order to show that there are many who express themselves in an hyperbolical manner on things which have no existence in reality. Thus is the man, who slandered our sages, refuted, and his opinions rejected.

¹ The passages in Rosh Hashana, II, are alluded to. Thus, this class, which kept to the Tradition, believed nevertheless, that the first appearance of the new moon ought still to be observed, and that the months and festivals ought to be fixed accordingly. They also rejected the constantly fixed Calendar. Nothing else is known of that class, but vid. infra, p. 273, note 1.

² On the expressions used here to denote "hyperbolical," תנאי and תנאי, which are not found in the Arabic dictionaries, I hope to treat shortly in another place.

"The same sect also often puts the question, why it should be impossible for Nissan to fall on a Monday, or a Wednesday, or a Friday? We should like, in the first place, to adduce [in reply to that question] something from tradition, which thou [O reader!] wilt find correct, if thou wilt bring into thy recollection. God has made manifest his will in reference to the Marcheshvan and Kislev and [consequently] the whole year by this, that he made the number of days of the week an uneven number, and fixed for every [week?] that which we mentioned already. Through this the months . . . reciprocally, and they follow each other, as they should (?)¹. Namely, once something was fixed in regard to these two months by the fixed norm [of the Calendar(?)], there is no possibility either to add to or to detract anything from the other months, for by it the other ten are already fixed. If this be so, it is also correct to assume that Nissan or Tishri . . .² Now it has been computed, that Nissan is never to fall on an even number but on an uneven number of days, namely, on the first, the third, the fifth, and the seventh [day of the week]. As little as it is possible to divide 50 by 7 in even portions, or 25 by 4, this being against the rules of arithmetic, as impossible it is for the computation [of the Calendar] to bring it about that Nissan fall on an even number of the days of the week.

"I will also adduce something from the Bible, and point first the following premises which are in accordance with

¹ This sentence is not quite intelligible, and the word חסר makes no sense. Prof. Steinschneider thinks that some form of the verb חס is concealed here. At all events, the author means to say, that by means of the fixing on every occasion of Marcheshvan and Kislev—the only months that have no uniform number of days—the other ten months follow each other in turns, and by a fixed law, alternately defective (חסר) and plene (מלא).

² The word ירחא makes no sense either. We must perhaps read ירחאן, "Nissan or Tishri are extended," i. e. somebody thought that these two months, and not Marcheshvan and Kislev, could alter their number of days. But the word ירחא in the sense of "stretching" is in Arabic used in a different sense. Or is, perhaps, the Hebrew word ירח concealed in ירחאן, and the text not quite correct.

the Law, viz. whenever God reveals one commandment before another, the second can never annul the first; the second can apply only to cases which are not included in the first. Thus, for instance, circumcision was [revealed] before the Sabbath, and God commanded us to perform the circumcision on any day. When, afterwards, the commandment was given to observe the Sabbath, it cannot be applied to circumcision so as to annul it. In the same way, burnt-offerings were commanded to be brought on the Sabbath, therefore the offerings were brought on every day and the Sabbath did not interfere with them. In the same way, the Paschal offering was ordained before the observance of the Sabbath, therefore it could be brought also on the Sabbath. But such commandments as were revealed after the commandment of the Sabbath may not be fulfilled on the Sabbath. We therefore say, since we see that God (he is mighty and strong!) gave us commandments for the festivals, which must necessarily be observed on them, he fixed them for those days only for this reason, that he knew, that they should not fall on a Sabbath; for, in that case, we should be unable to fulfil them, as having been ordained after the Sabbath. From this we can infer that the reckoning of the Calendar, revealed to us by his Messenger . . .”

The reasons that induce me to attribute this fragment to Saadiah are as follows:—

1. The tenor of the whole fragment points to a defence of the Calendar and its authority. We know that Saadiah all along maintained, in opposition to the Karaites, that the Jewish Calendar, with all its laws and regulations, was of remote antiquity, a point on which he was not only contradicted by the Karaites, but also by the Rabbanites (Hai Gaon, Isaac b. Baruch, Abraham Ibn Ezra, Maimonides, &c.)¹. His opinion was only followed by Chananel b. Chushiel²,

¹ Vid. *Responses of the Geonim*, ed. Lyck, No. 1; Abraham b. Chija's ספר העיבור, 59, 94; Ibn Ezra on Lev. xxiii. 3; Maimuni, הלכות קה"ח, V, 3; Israeli, *Jesod Olam*, IV, 6.

² *Migdal Chananel*, p. 32.

Meshullam b. Kalonymos¹, and Obadiah b. David². But not one of these latter can have been the author of our fragment, even only for the reason that they wrote nothing but Hebrew.

2. Saadiah, in consequence of this theory of his, was also compelled to maintain, that all the Postponements (דחיית) were also of the same ancient origin, and that, therefore, the Passover, for instance, never could have fallen on Monday, Wednesday, or Friday, in accordance with the well-known rule לא ביום פסח. And on this point also he was contradicted, not only by all Karaites, but also by many Rabbanites. When it was objected, that many passages in the Talmud showed nevertheless, that the Passover fell on one of these days, e.g. the Mishna Sabbath, xv, 3; Pesachim, viii, 10; Chagiga, ii, 4; Menachot, xi, 7, &c., Saadiah answered, that, in these passages, the question was discussed only theoretically, namely, what was to be done, suppose the Passover fell on one of these days. For, Saadiah said, it is nowhere written that Passover actually fell on one of those days. But here also his opponents could show him the passage: פנים אחת חל שבעי של ערבה להיות בשבת (Tosefta, Sukka, III, Babli, 43 b)³. Of all Karaites, it was Salmon b. Jerucham, who had collected the greatest number of arguments against Saadiah, having devoted chaps. 4-6 of his controversial writing to this subject⁴. He uses several passages to show that Saadiah had not only gone against the Karaites, but also against his own authorities, and there says of him (chap. 5): "גועל בדרכי אבותיו • בוחז בדבור רבותיו • בוחר ברוע מחשבותיו • הורו והונו מלב שקרותיו • • • "הפך תורת אדון האדונים • וחבל דברי שושנים • עם⁵ תלמוד ותורת כהנים • וסדר עולם וכל ענינים • והלא⁶ כתוב חל • I add some characteristic Talmudic passages quoted by him:

¹ Vid. סמ"ג, Commandments, No. 47.

² Comm. to הלכות קה"ח, VII.

³ Vid. particularly Abr. b. Chija, l. c.

⁴ Cf. JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, VIII, 685.

⁵ Cf. Pinsker, p. 16.

⁶ From chap. 5 I used the Leyden MS. (Cod. Warner, 41) and Pinsker's copy (in the Vienna *Beth Hamidrash*), on the margin of which various

להיות יום כפור בשבת הקדושה • החלות מתחלקות לערב לה מקודשה •
 חל להיות ערב שבת השעיר של יום הכפורים נאכל בערב ביראה ונעשה •
 והבבליין אוכלין אותו חי מפני שדעתן יפה ומאוששה • "זאת ראייה גדולה •
 כי יום כפורים נפל ערב שבת בתחלה • בידוע לכל קהלה • והיום למה שנו
 דרכם להתחבלה •

"סח ר' עקיבא וקולו הרים • לא חלבי שבת מקריבין ביום הכפורים • ולא
 של יום כפור קרבין בשבת בחבורים • והוא לכם ראש הסופרים • "ענו בני
 מקרא • זאת לכם ראייה גמורה • כי בערב שבת יום הכפורים קרה • והם אמרו
 לא אנו יום כפור שלא כתורה • • •

"רבותיך¹ כתבו בפרק באי זה צד צולין • העצמות והנידון ישרפו בששה
 עשר בימי חולין • חל שבעה עשר להיות בשבת כלולין • שרופים בשבעה עשר
 ומבוטלין • "קרב עתה ושמע דברים נכוחים • אם ששה עשר יפול בשבת
 מנוחים • הלא חמשה עשר בניסן יום ששי צורחים • ואתה תאמר כי הם
 לא ברו פסח שוחחים • • • "סמך פיתומי ידו על משענת קנה • אמר חל ששה
 עשר להיות בשבת מן השבת פונה • ופתרוננו אם חל ככת' אם תגביה כנשר
 ואם בין כוכבים תחנה • אשיבנו על זה הרבר ואל אדם לא אכנה • • •

We see, therefore, that to Saadiah all these passages of the Talmud have only an hypothetical meaning (as we know already from Isaac b. Baruch), and that they must be taken in the same way as Obad. 4. Now, we find at the beginning of the second leaf of our fragment that the author, to prove an hyperbolical interpretation of Talmudic passages, quotes, *inter alia*, also Obad. 4, and we may assume from the whole, that such passages from the Talmud are here alluded to, as were quoted by Salmon b. Jerucham, and Isaac b. Baruch.

3. At the end of the first leaf we read, that the class of persons who still fixed their months by the first appearance of the moon maintained that they stood, notwithstanding, on Rabbinical ground, their first teachers having proceeded in the same way, &c. It would appear from this, as if the author of the fragment doubted these facts, as mentioned in

readings from other MSS. are also recorded. I consider it unnecessary for our present purpose to give here all those variations.

¹ From chap. 6.

the Mishnah! But we know that Saadiah asserted, that the new moons had always been fixed by calculation, and that they commenced summoning witnesses, &c., only after Zadok and Boethos and others had maintained that the Torah enjoined to fix the new moons by observation; and that they did so for the purpose of showing that calculation and observation coincided¹. The above cited passage becomes only thus intelligible.

4. We read further in the fragment that a divine precept cannot be annulled by another and subsequent one, and that circumcision must take place, and the two daily burnt-offerings be brought on the Sabbath, because these commandments were anterior to that of the Sabbath. We find the same idea in Saadiah's philosophical work. The Gaon speaks there of the impossibility of abrogating the Law (נסך אלשרע) and says, that there is much which apparently admits of abrogation, but that it is not really the case. Thus are the offerings and the circumcision on the Sabbath no abrogation, because they were commanded before the Sabbath: ואלו תקריב אלקרבאן פי אלסבת בעד תחטיר אלעמל פיה הוא איצא לים בנסך בל הו ממא יודע דפע אלנסך לאן שריעה אלקרבאן כאנת קבל אלסבת פלם יזו אן יחטרה שריעה אלסבת פיכון דלך נסכא פחטרת סאיר אלעמאל אלא אלקרבאן ואלכתאנה אלמתקדמין קבלהא².

5. Our fragment further shows that such work as was prohibited the Sabbath, may under no circumstance be done on the Sabbath. If, then, God commanded several things to be done on the festivals that were prohibited to be done on the Sabbath, he must have intended that these festivals should not fall on the Sabbath. Here, unfor-

¹ Vid. my *Miscellanies on Saadiah*, II (l. c., 209). May not the assertion that the new moon should be observed, in spite of the tradition, be connected with the action taken by Ben Meir, who, at the time of Saadiah, wanted to re-establish the authority of Palestine in regard to the fixing of the festivals? (vid. *JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW*, IX, 36-38). In that case, another proof could be found for Saadiah's authorship of our fragment.

² *Kitāb al-amanāt*, ed. Landauer, 136 (ed. Slucki, 70).

tunately, the fragment stops; the author alluded probably to some such case as the bringing of offerings of rejoicing on the Feast of Weeks. And this case is really adduced by Isaac b. Baruch, in the name of Saadiah, as an argument for his theory, *vid.* ספר העבור, p. 60: וכן אנו אומרים על: . . . פסח שאינו ביום ששי . . . ועוד מפני עצרת שלא יהיה בשבת ואין מקריבין שלמים בשבת והקב"ה חייב בעצרת הקרבת שלמים ככתוב ושני כבשים בני שנה לזבח שלמים וכו'.

The parallel passages quoted here, which may perhaps be added to in course of time, raise the assumption of Saadiah's authorship to a degree of probability, approaching certainty. The question then arises, to which of his works does it belong? If my above-mentioned conjecture be correct, that Isaac b. Baruch's writing was based on Saadiah's כתאב אלעבור, it would be obvious to suggest that work, for such questions as solar and lunar months are also treated there; further, several theories of the Calendar, such as those of 'Abû 'Imrân at-Tiffîsi, and others, are dealt with. But it is also possible that it was part of an anti-Karaite book of Saadiah's, and, in that case, the כתאב אלתמיז would suggest itself, in which the question of the age of the Calendar and its rules are dwelt on at length. We submit our conjecture for the approval of experts; if they consider it to be correct, it would be an important gain for the history of Jewish literature.

We have seen that Saadiah was the first great teacher of Judaism, who opposed the Karaites by special writings, but he was also the last. Of the Geonim that came after him, it was only Samuel b. Chofni who casually combats the Karaites, but he has written no special work on the subject¹. Nothing anti-Karaite is, as far as I know, found in the works of the last two celebrated Geonim, Sherira and Hai². Nor was any one found among the

¹ Vid. Harkavy, *Stud. u. Mittheil.*, III, 6, 7; 44-47.

² The *responsum*, שרי חשויה, No. 34, is not of Hai, as Weiss (l. c., IV, 189) assumes, for Chananel is quoted there.

great teachers of the East who defended the "dead lion" against the attacks and slights of the Karaites. A pupil of Saadiah who had undertaken the task, Jacob b. Samuel, would almost have been forgotten, if the Karaites who controverted him had not preserved his name. The controversy did not cease on account of a peace concluded by the parties, but from exhaustion. It is true, a small anti-Karaite pamphlet appeared at the beginning of the twelfth century in the East, probably in Egypt, but it does not touch at all upon points of the Law on which the Rabbanites and Karaites differ; in fact, it is no more than a literary curiosity¹. In Europe, the controversy with the Karaites never assumed important dimensions. A great teacher of the West, Meshullam b. Kalonymos, combats the views of the Karaites towards the end of the tenth, or the beginning of the eleventh century, but we do not know the motives that called forth the controversy, nor does it seem that he has written a separate book against them². The scholars in Spain were contented, either with a defence of the Tradition only, without taking the offensive (Jehuda Hallevi), or they corroborated their truth from the never ceasing source of Tradition, and by the distinguished achievements of its adherents (Abraham ben David), or they appealed to the secular power (Jehuda Ibn Ezra).

But the Karaites themselves also seem to have lost vitality and productiveness, by the absence of a strenuous controversy against them. Not regarding a few sporadic followers, the independent creative power of the Karaites ceases with Jeshua b. Jehuda (Abulfarağ Furqân ibn 'Asad), who wrote some twenty years after Samuel b. Chofni. For the im-

¹ Vid. JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, VIII, 700, 701, where I communicated the epigraph and some lines from this little pamphlet. I hope shortly to give more of it.

² On Meshullam's polemic against the Karaites cf. Rapoport, *Biography of Nathan b. Jehiel*, note 36; Müller, *Responsen des R. Meschullam*, p. 8; Epstein, *Revue des Études Juives*, XXVII, 84, 85. The latter says that a leaf of the MS. of the Vatican, No. 32, contains the words: אלו חשיבות שדשיב למינן רבנא משלם הרב בחכמא, but, unfortunately, the leaf is illegible.

portance of his pupil, Tobia b. Mose, lies really in his translations, from which he is called "ha-ma'atîq." The brilliant period of Karaite literature ends with Jehuda Hadassi, but he was after all only a compiler, although his work, *Eshkol Hakkofer*, is invaluable to us, because it contains the results of the Karaite learning before him. The Karaite authors from the twelfth century, except, perhaps, the two Aarons, produced hardly anything new, especially in the field of the knowledge of the Law. They all depend on their predecessors, and "enrich themselves by their writings¹." They all, even to their last teacher, Abraham Firkowitsch, draw inspiration from the repetition of the most virulent attacks against the Rabbanites in general, and the Fajjûmite, "that man there" (הַיָּא אֶלְרִנִּל)² in particular. But a literature cannot live on chewing the cud of older opinions and on controversy, and nothing more, especially when these are not even fertilized by any new thoughts. Thus it is that the Karaite literature vanished silently. A new Saadiah would be required to rouse it to fresh life, but our age is not such as to produce one, nor has Judaism any interest in calling forth new animosities.

SAMUEL POZNAŃSKI.

¹ Hadassi says, in reference to what he borrowed from previous authors (Alphab. 64, letter ק): כִּי מִסְפָּרֵיהֶם נִחְשְׁבִי. Cf. *Monatsschrift*, XL, 126.

² Thus most of the Karaites who wrote in Arabic designate him. It must, however, be observed, that his Rabbanite opponent, Mebasser Hallevi, designates him in the same way. Vid. *Zapiski*, l. c., p. 208.